

# GLASER GAZETTE

SVA  
NYC



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**Born to Teach**  
Glaser's lasting lessons  
on responsible design  
BY STEVEN HELLER AND LITA TALARICO

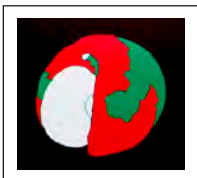


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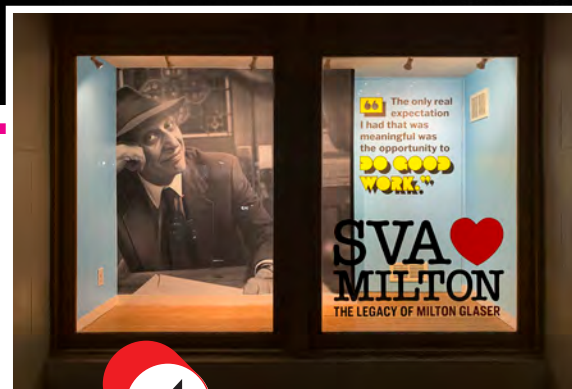
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designer at work

AND  
MORE!





Statement from the President

When the world lost Milton Glaser in 2020, many of the tributes that followed rightly emphasized his concept of designers as engaged and ethical citizens above all, whose energies and imaginations should always be focused on serving their communities.

One of the great privileges of my job as president of the School of Visual Arts was working with Milton—who taught at the College for 60 years and served as the acting chairman of our board—to turn some of his civic-minded ideas into reality. These include his 2005 and 2006 SVA posters protesting the genocide in Darfur and supporting the ONE Campaign to fight poverty and disease; his 2014 It's Not Warming, It's Dying campaign to raise awareness of climate change; his 2017 campaign to aid Puerto Rico after the hurricanes, Give Help; and, most famously, his 2001 I ♥ NY More Than Ever poster, which updated his most famous work to serve as a balm after the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

All of these works spoke not only to the power of art and design to inspire and catalyze change, but also to the high character and essential decency of the man who created them. If only one part of Milton Glaser's legacy may endure, I hope it is this.

David Rhodes

DAVID RHODES  
PRESIDENT, SCHOOL OF VISUAL ARTS



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Opening Shop: From Student to Studio Founder

BY JUSTIN COLT



View of The Collected Works' first studio in Milton Glaser's building. Justin Colt graduated from SVA in 2013.

I had the honor of working as a designer for Milton for a little more than a year. When I decided to start my own studio, I nervously sat down with him to explain my decision. Without a second thought, Milton told

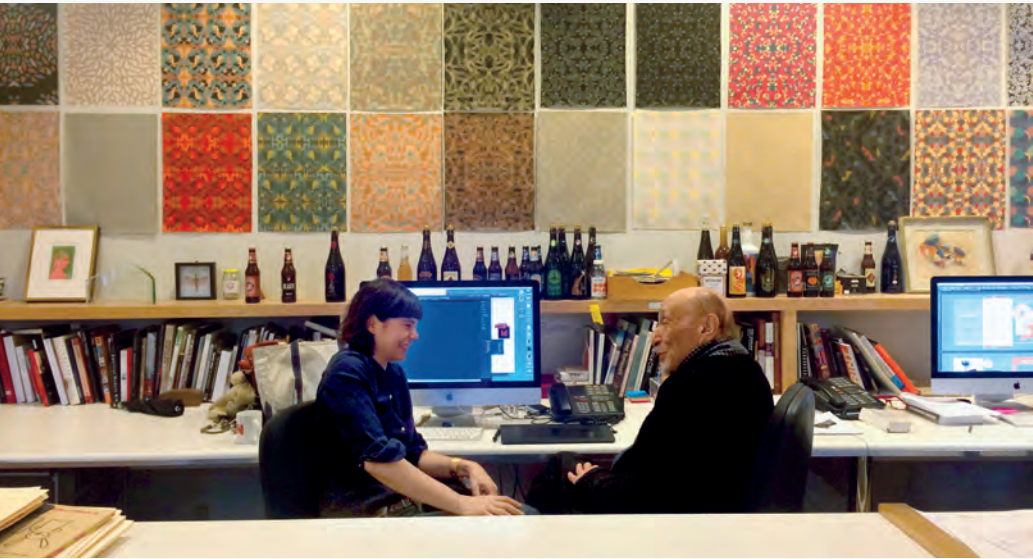


me, "All I've ever wanted to do is work for myself, so of course I want that for everyone else." After a few seconds, Milton asked me if I had a studio location to work from—as I would need that to be taken seriously in this industry. I told him I did not. He said,

"Come with me," and led me to the first floor of his building, where he showed me a beautiful small studio space. "Would something like this work for you and your new business?" he asked me.

I told him I'm sure it was beyond what I could afford, as I was just starting out. "Just pay me what you can afford—it's yours to use," Milton said, without a pause. My studio, The Collected Works, owes so much to that gift Milton gave us. He never raised our rent, even when we asked him if he should. We worked from that studio for seven years, only recently moving out.

The studio was possible because of Milton's generosity. Anyone who interacted with Milton has similar stories of his kindness—I've heard many. Thanks so much for your enthusiasm and generosity, Milton.



Finding Miracles: Milton's Teachings beyond the Classroom

BY SUE WALSH

Sue Walsh is a principal of design at SYPartners and a faculty member in the MFA Design program, where she also received her MFA in 2006. She met Milton when she was a student at SVA, and after graduation, she worked alongside him for nine years from 2007 to 2016. Below is an excerpt from a letter she wrote to Milton the week he was dying in 2020.

Dear Milton,

I just miss talking with you. How we had lunch at that crummy Greek place on Third Avenue and saw a young girl out the window carrying a rabbit—their faces were both oval-esque and strikingly similar. We talked about finding miracles. How when we were designing a rug, we would change a color, and it was so thrilling to you to see how the whole pattern changed as a result. How we saw the Matisse exhibition at MoMA, Morandi at the Met, the Kentridge show that haunted both of us for weeks, how any number of books we read together would change how we saw anything and everything, how Shirley made a new recipe for pasta al vongole for last night's dinner, which we spoke about for nearly an hour, while clients called, getting only a voicemail. How the history of art is the history of the world, how preference and affection were mysteries of humanity, and how everyday started with you walking into the studio, exclaiming, "Hello Sue, there you are, big as life." I would say that I'll carry you in my heart, but you would tell me don't be cheesy, darling, let's get back to work.



Steven Heller and Lita Talarico are co-founders and co-chairs of MFA Design/Designer as Entrepreneur.

Milton with a student holding his book (Upper Left).

Milton takes a selfie with students (Upper Right).

Milton with students during his 2019 final lecture (Below).

Born to Teach

By Steven Heller and Lita Talarico



Milton Glaser's career was as an artist-designer but his vocation was as an educator. At SVA not a year went by, from 1960 to 2019, in which he did not have a fully attended class of students consuming his every word. He loved the process, and, although he believed that learning in a classroom should be limited to two hours before exhaustion takes over, he savored each minute. He touched so many hearts and minds, and inspired so many talents, not a second was wasted time. Then in 2021, he made a surprising decision to discontinue his legendary workshop. It was SVA's most magnetic offering and a huge loss for the school.

Milton's decision was announced shortly after we founded SVA's first MFA Design program. From the beginning we had imposed on Milton's generosity to give guest lectures to our students, yet we wanted much more of him. This was the ideal moment for the "big ask." So, we invited him out to lunch; Milton loved going to a nice restaurant for lunch.

We got to the point. "Milton," we said in unison, "since you are not doing your workshop any longer, will you teach for us in the MFA Design program?" Having rehearsed our talking points in order to thwart any resistance he might have, we took turns regaling him with the ideas that underscored our new MFA Design program, which we then called The Designer as Author. Our overarching plan was to provide the opportunity for designers to develop their own content as entrepreneurs. We were confident that this would appeal to Milton, and, furthermore, it was an opportunity for him to design an open-ended course that would alter conventional methods and, therefore, change the ways for designers to engage with the world—to not simply serve clients but to also be creators and producers themselves. This notion seemed to resonate.

When the food arrived we saw that he was leaning favorably toward our proposal. By dessert we made even more headway.

Milton would only have to teach for one semester, one Wednesday night for fifteen weeks; he could conduct the class in his studio or ours, whichever he preferred, and he was free to teach whatever he was passionate about—put theories into practice and make practice come alive any way he wished.

We noticed he was still paying attention. He was not dismissive. We did not really have to do much convincing either. We gave him months to prepare if necessary. But it wasn't necessary. Milton knew what and how he wanted to teach, even if he did not know the specifics at that very moment. The door was opened, and he came through brimming with ideas he would later realize as projects.

Agreeing to teach on a regular basis in MFA Design gave us a programmatic centerpiece titled Design and Intentions. We had already enlisted an enviable faculty of critical free-thinkers, but Milton's participation was a gravitational pull that went beyond the traditional passing down of wisdom and knowledge to a younger generation. It was the portal to a universe of new possibilities where anything was possible, where thoughts were as valuable as skills, where what was made was conceived with ethical virtues. Milton's class was equal parts philosophy, sociology, anthropology and psychology tied together through aesthetics to serve a greater good. It was nascent social entrepreneurship.

Each September Design and Intentions was the first class to greet the incoming students in the MFA Design program. Milton laid the ethical groundwork for what lay ahead in their lives as professionals. He stressed that their designs had consequences, and as designers they must be responsible citizens. This meant designers not only serve the client but also serve the community—indeed the society that they live in. He stressed that as designers

they should be aware of the impact of their work in the world.

Each year there were more new initiatives than the year before. In 2014 Glaser announced his most audacious and ambitious project: he had been asked to develop a package of graphics and products for Bhutan, officially known as the Kingdom of Bhutan, a landlocked country in South Asia located at the eastern end of the Himalayas. Bhutan is bordered to the north by China and to the south, east and west by India. Its main industries are tourism, hydroelectric power and happiness. Happiness was the currency of Bhutan, we learned from Matt DeSantis of the Tarayana Foundation in Bhutan. He had reached out to Milton to create a logo for their organization. Milton went a step further: he offered the first-year MFA Design students a semester-long project to promote and brand the Kingdom.

Milton had a special interest in building collaborations among designers. So, he established teams within the Class of 2016 that developed over fifteen different ideas that would not only benefit the Tarayana Foundation but also bolster Bhutan as a nation. Among the ideas were partnerships with fashion companies, bike tours, several product lines that celebrate Bhutanese culture, and the piece de résistance, a conference on happiness.

Many of the ideas were geared toward creating sustainable economic stability while helping the country amplify its character and culture on an international stage. The culmination of the work, entitled "Reimagining Bhutan," was showcased in a series of individual folios that were presented to Matt for implementation. Matt and Milton met with the class to discuss the feedback and the possibilities that could develop from the initial concepts. Although not adopted in the end, the results were extraordinary.

Another popular Design and Intentions project in 2017 was a collaborative assignment to create a vehicle for sharing

with an audience "The Curated Miracles of New York." Working in tandem, the first-year students decided that these "miracles" should address the notions of "Shop," "Eat" and "Explore." They selected various places of interest throughout the boroughs on which to focus attention. Milton's objective was to build a community based on "the interaction of students defining their own roles and challenging their respective strengths." The review of outcomes took place at Glaser's studio. It was an inspiring presentation. Sadly, it was also Milton's very last class for SVA.

Happiness was the currency of Bhutan, we learned from Matt DeSantis of the Tarayana Foundation in Bhutan. He had reached out to Milton to create a logo for their organization. Milton went a step further: he offered the first-year MFA Design students a semester-long project to promote and brand the Kingdom.

Nonetheless, it was not Milton's last hurrah. In September 2019 he gave his final lecture for MFA Design and demonstrated that he still had a firmer grasp of the consequences of art and design than any practitioner or pundit—indeed most anyone.

simple yet profound: "A designer must do no harm" and "also must do some good." The traditional design roles of sellers, promoters and manipulators are not acceptable, he asserted. "Make a living but not at the expense of other living things."

Milton's Solomonic wisdom and the commanding strength of his persona captured the attention of the attendees. The finale of his talk was consumed by questions. Some, he admitted, were unanswerable, but he responded generously and eloquently to them all. A more uplifting afternoon could not be imagined. We only wish we had the forethought to record it.



SCHOOL OF VISUAL ARTS

GLASER GAZETTE





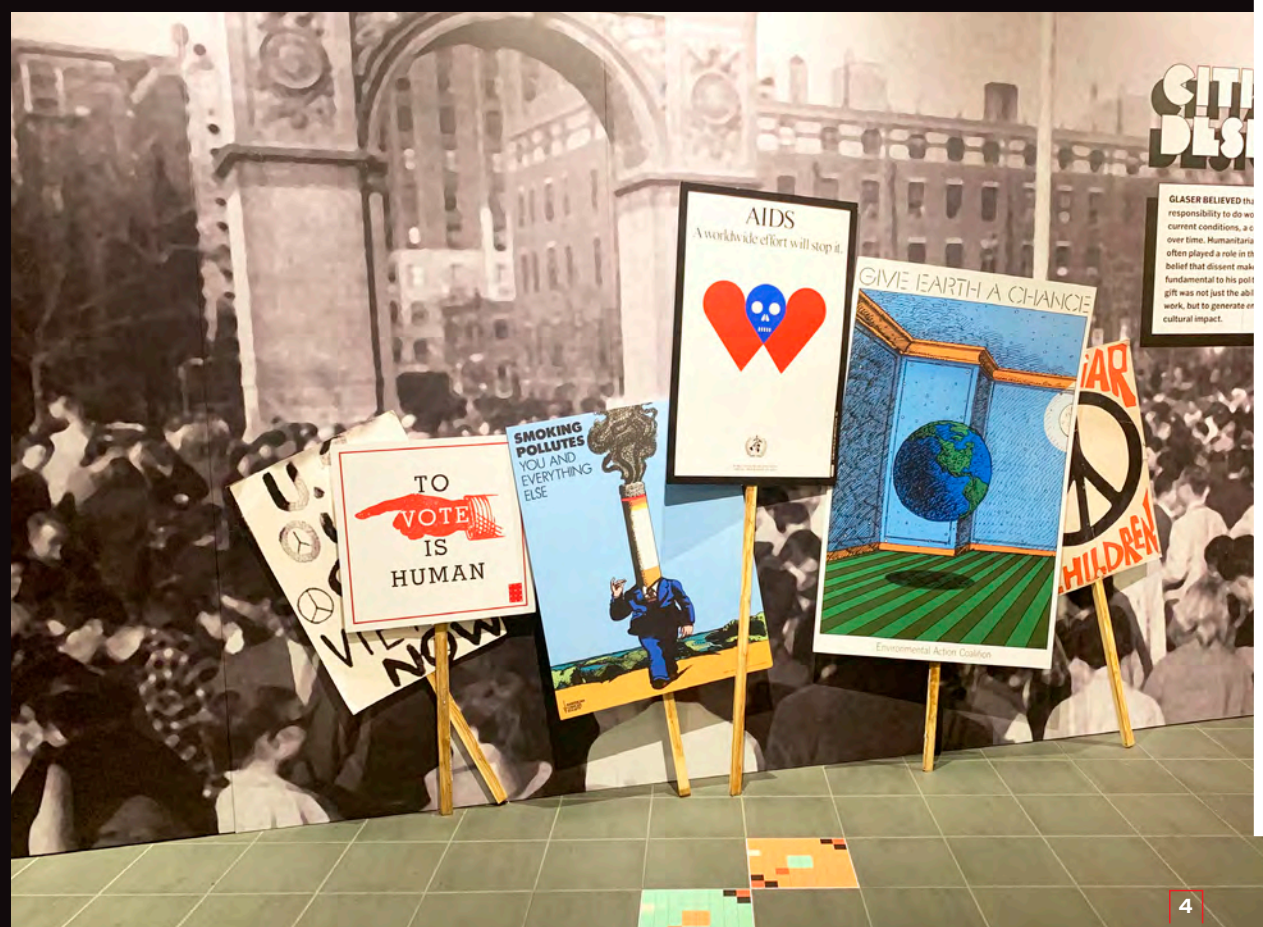
## CAPTIONS

1. The "I ♥ NY" Effect (Top Left). A timeline of Glaser's career faces a simulation of a New York City gift shop brimming with several adaptations of his "I ♥ NY" logo.
2. Milton's Philosophy (Top Center). Students admire tenets of Milton's design philosophy in the West Gallery.
3. West Gallery Window (Top Right). The graphic wall text of Milton's name, including his iconic heart graphic, entices visitors into the exhibition.
4. Protest Posters (Lower Left). Glaser believed the designer had a responsibility to do work that attempts to improve current conditions. Humanitarian and ecological concerns often played a role in the work he produced.
5. Book Review (Lower Center). A "bookstore" nods to the *New York Magazine* logo and displays some of the numerous publications Glaser designed.
6. For The Record (Lower Right). Many may not be familiar with the product designs and album covers Glaser created over the decades. Here, two storefronts showcase his work on publications, such as *The Underground Gourmet*, and an assortment of his work on album covers.

## The Legacy of Milton Glaser

Between December 7, 2021 and January 10, 2022, visitors to SVA's galleries got to stroll through the "streets" of Milton Glaser's career, as an exhibition in his honor—cleverly conceived by the mind of SVA's 3D Design chair, Kevin O' Callaghan, to mimic a fictitious New York City neighborhood—was on display.

# SVA ♥ MILTON





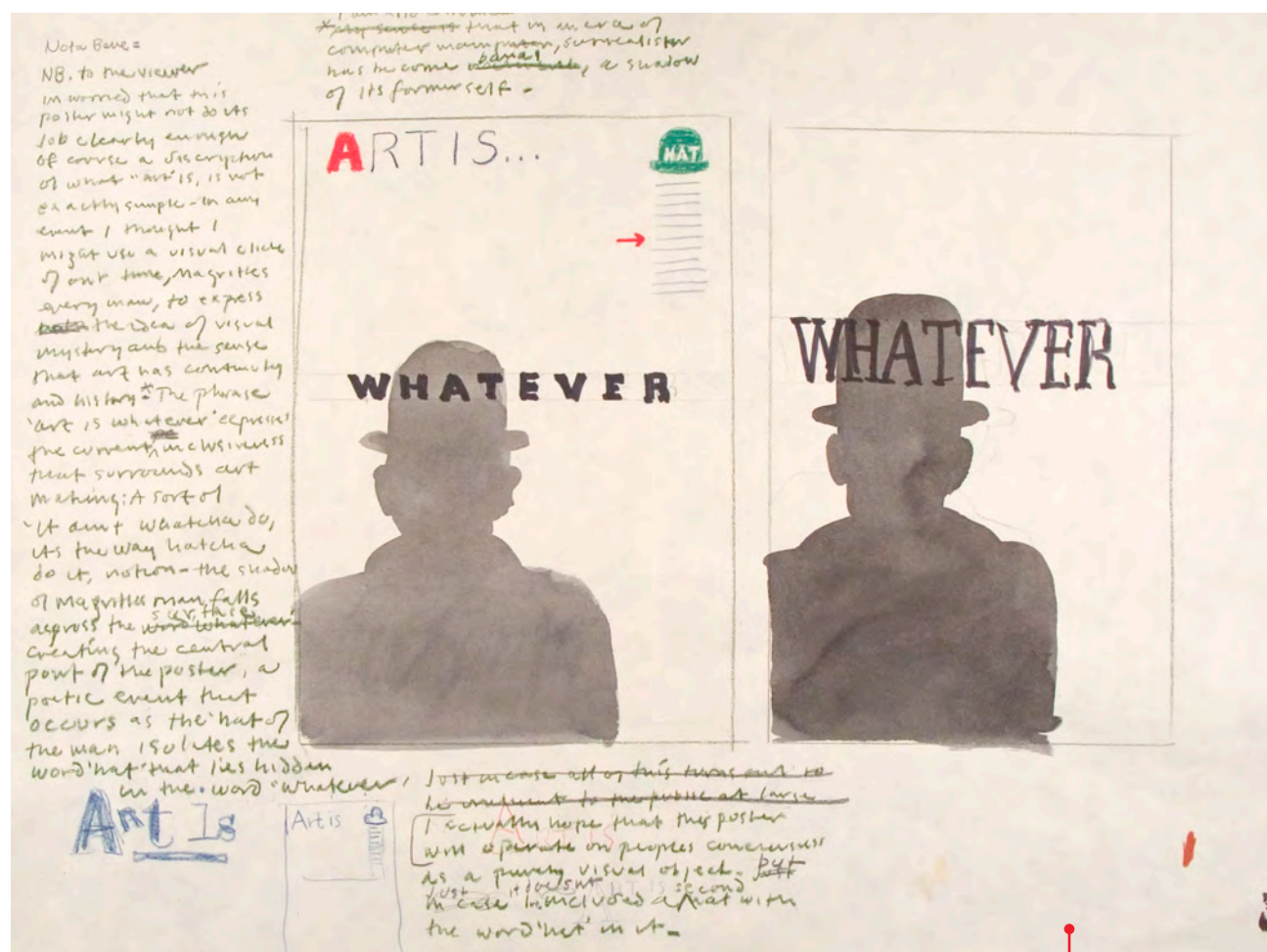
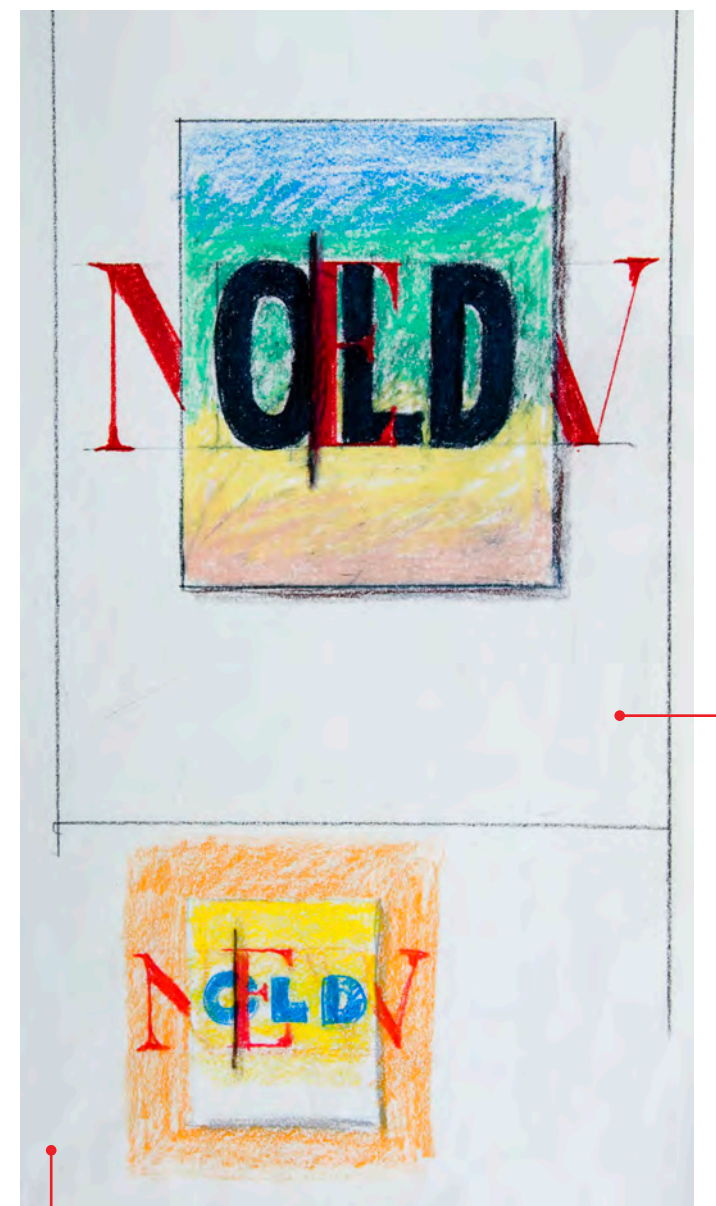


SVA Poster Notebook

# DRAWING IS THINKING

## NO OTHER ARTIST

is more closely associated with SVA's subway poster campaign than Glaser, who created 26 posters for the project over the course of more than 50 years. Here's a look at some poster sketches from the Glaser Archives, which reveal how experimentation led to a beautiful finished piece.



## GLASER'S SVA POSTERS

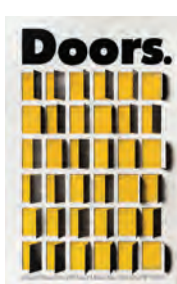
A TIMELINE



**1965**  
Glaser's first SVA poster pays homage to both classicism and iconoclasm.



**1966**  
This considerably more abstracted head is an exercise in 3D illusion.



**1967**  
Another 3D "trick" to illustrate the possibilities of education.



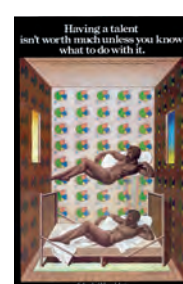
**1967**  
Glaser juxtaposes a 3D palette with a flat rainbow, celebrating art's variety.



**1971**  
The thin black line and flat color here represent high Push Pin style.



**1973**  
Glaser's performer here juggles an array of abstract objects.



**1977**  
This surreal poster takes its cue from one of SVA's most enduring taglines.



**1979**  
Glaser's opera diva stands in for artistic talents of all types.



**1980**  
A riff on Glaser's "art is work" theme: an imagined rabbit made real.



**1985**  
This convincing faux-collage allegedly fooled many viewers.



**1987**  
Glaser's SVA anniversary logo suggests a window—and an odometer.



**1994**  
This typographical work doubles as an examination into the creative process.



**1995**  
Glaser liked to "quote" the work of favorite artists; here, it's Henri Matisse.

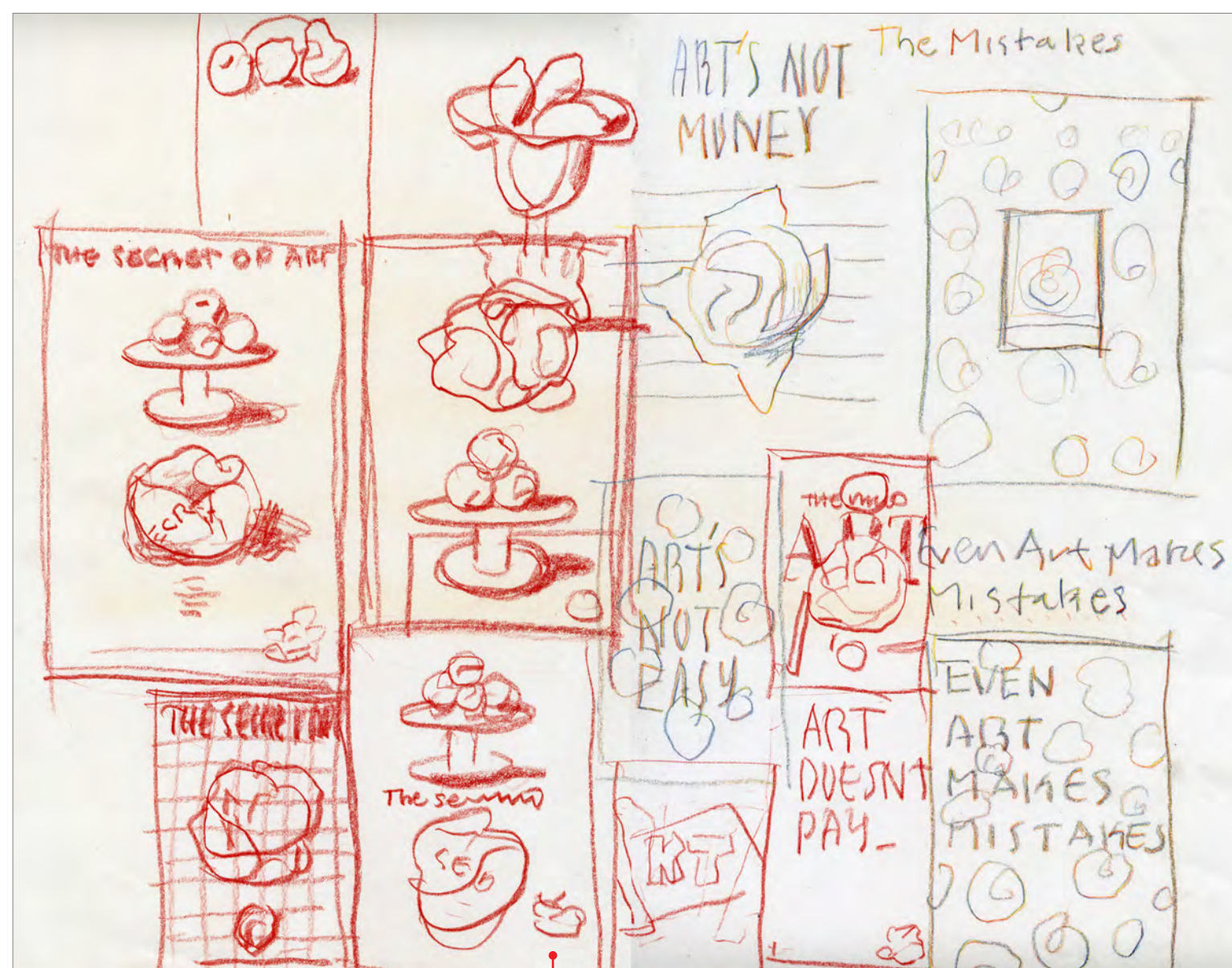


**1996**  
Another tribute to an artistic hero; this time, it's René Magritte.



**2001**  
Red and green make blue in this dreamlike watercolor sketch.

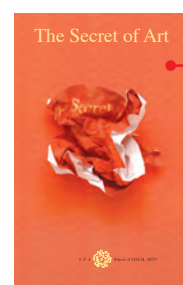




2001  
Glaser updated his most famous logo for this iconic post-9/11 work.



2003  
The "Big Apple" is also a heart in this similarly civic-minded poster.



2008  
A return to the "art is work" theme—keep trying, until it's right.



2011  
The first in a series of three, this poster celebrates ideas and thinking.



2011  
Next, Glaser urges creative thinkers to take the first step toward realization.



2011  
The series' concluding message: Do what you love.



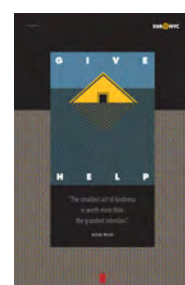
2012  
The third and final "I LOVE NY" iteration, this one post-Hurricane Sandy.



2017  
Fittingly, Glaser's last series of SVA posters centered on empathy in art.



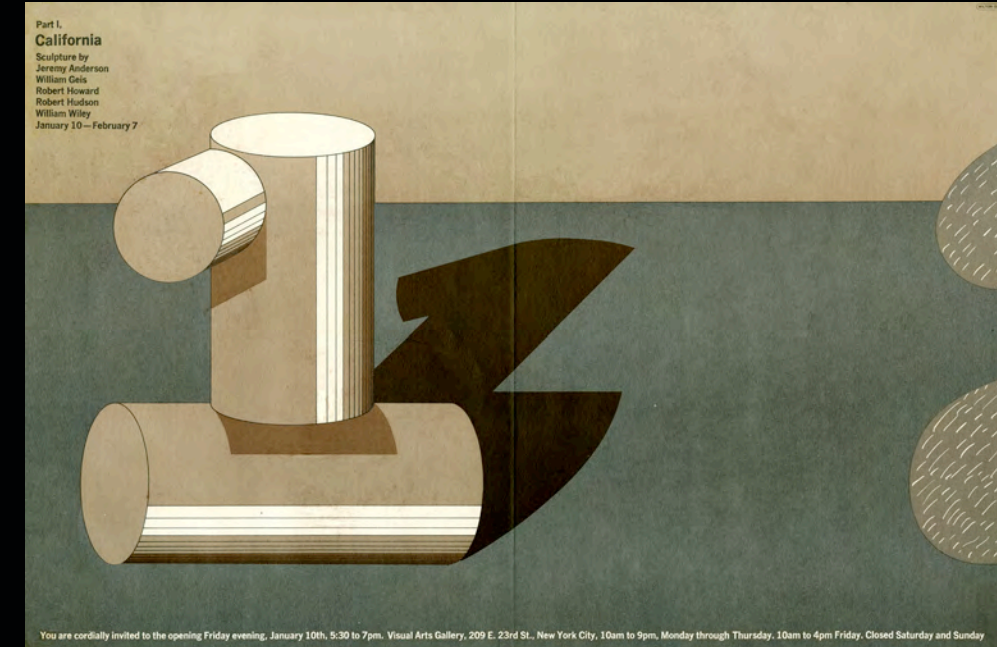
2017  
Creativity, Glaser said, is in our nature and how we commune.



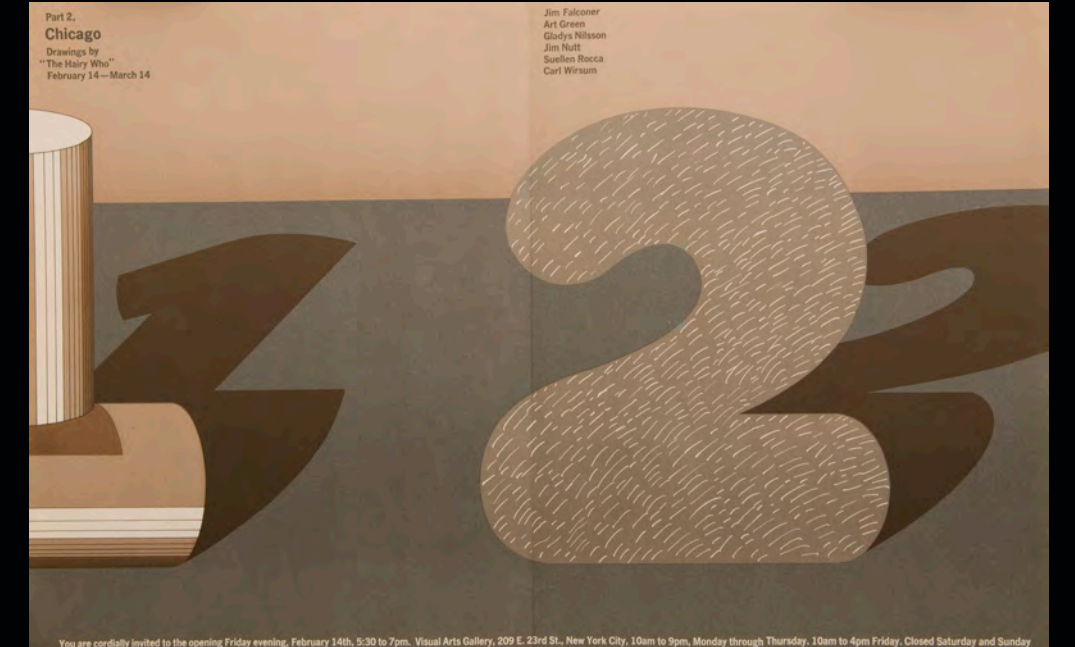
2017  
"Give" and "Help" here can be read either separately or together.

Selected Favorites from the SVA Archives

# VISUAL ARTS GALLERY POSTERS



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An exhibition of 80 extraordinary Polish posters:

opening September 16th, 7 p.m. to 10 p.m.

gallery hours 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday

Posters collected by Barry Foreman

The School of Visual Arts 209 East 23rd Street New York City

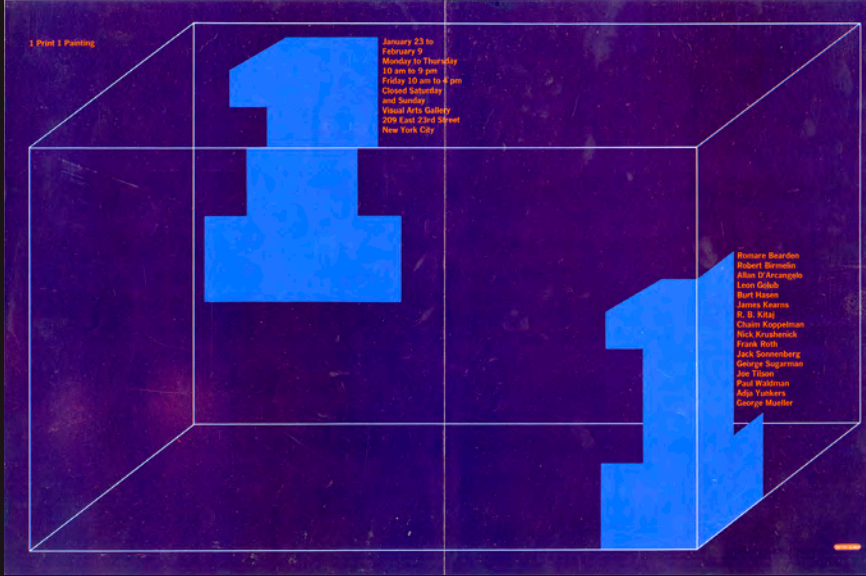
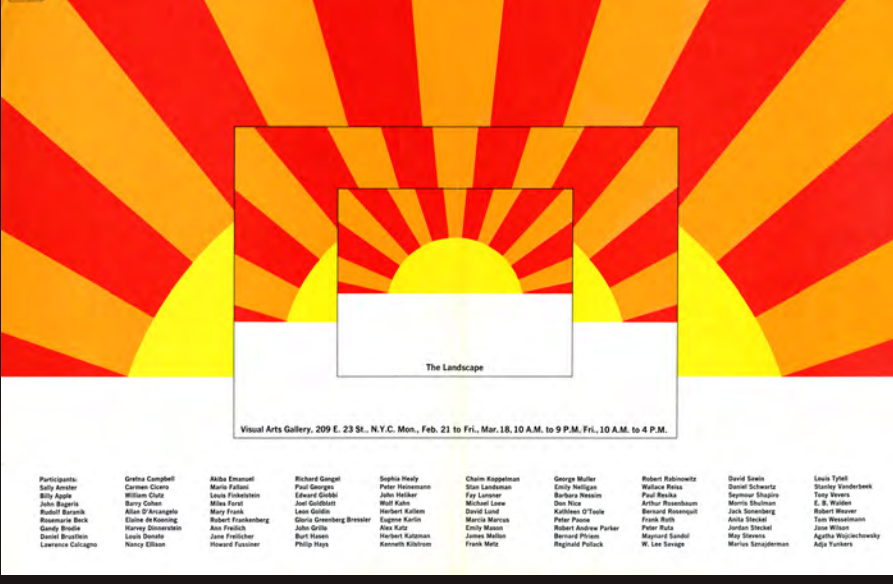
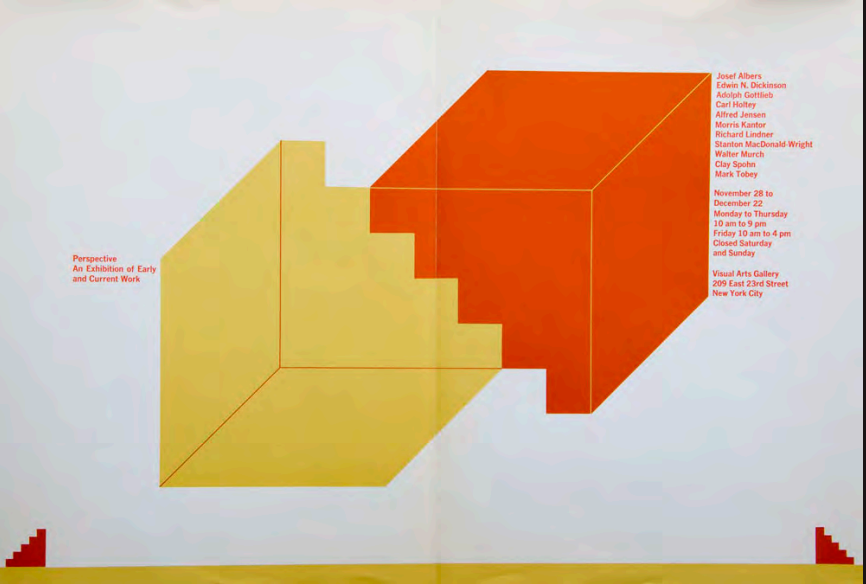
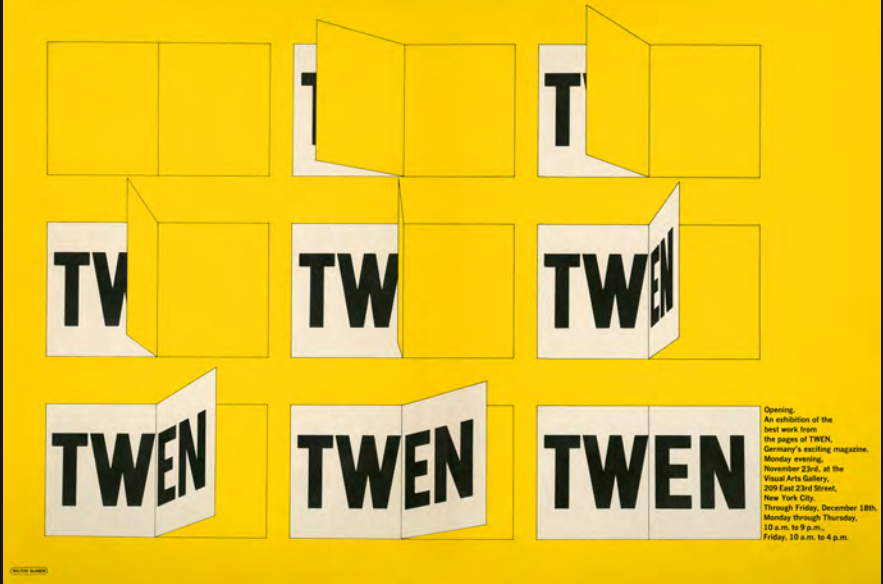
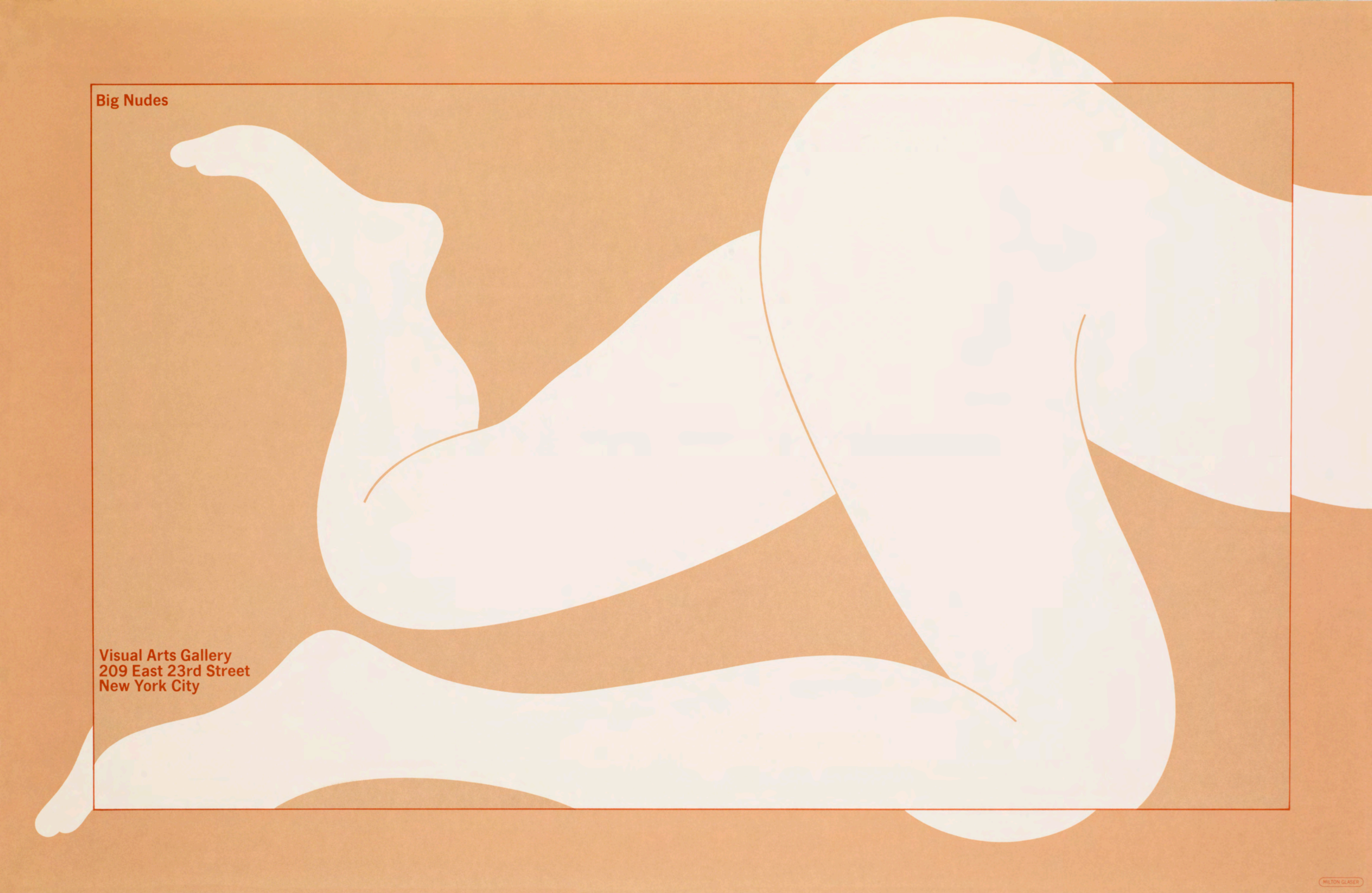
September 16th through September 30th

Shirley Glaser, Milton's wife, served as the Visual Arts Gallery director from 1964-1969.

She oversaw a remarkable run of high-concept group shows with an educational mission, filled with both major and lesser-known New York artists. Milton Glaser designed small posters for the exhibitions, which represented a mini-laboratory for his most adventurous ideas about design. Throughout the series, Milton Glaser experimented with breaking through the boundaries of the page while presenting a compelling graphical representation of the shows' themes.

1. Part One, California, 1969.
2. Part Two, Chicago, 1969.
3. Polish Poster, 1966.





Captions

1. Big Nudes, 1966.
2. Twen, 1965.
3. Perspective, 1967.
4. The Landscape, 1965.
5. Homage to Morandi, 1967.
6. Inside the Big Apple, 1968.
7. Now: Photographers of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, 1965.
8. Theatre Posters from Europe and Japan from the Collection of PRINT, 1966.
9. Concrete Poetry, 1968.
10. One Painting, 1968.
11. The Poison Pen: Viperous Drawings, 1965.



## DESK ACCESSORIES

Some designers prefer their studios as blank spaces, to be filled only with their own thoughts and creativity; others like to surround themselves with art and inspiration. Milton Glaser was in the latter camp, as this recreation of his work environment for the “I ♥ Milton” exhibition makes clear.

### Rhodes and Baum Photos

Above Glaser's drafting table hung photos of two late friends and collaborators: SVA founder Silas H. Rhodes (top), who hired Glaser as a faculty member in 1960, and restaurateur Joe Baum, for whom Glaser designed the dining rooms of the Aurora, Rainbow Room and Windows on the World restaurants, among others.

### Black Cat Face

This cat face with glass eyes, a souvenir from France, was designed to scare birds away from one's garden.

### Last Supper Ticket

In his later years, Glaser was unable to travel much, so when Ilić visited Leonardo da Vinci's newly restored *Last Supper* in Italy, he wanted to hear all about its refurbishment, Ilić says, and pinned the admission ticket to his wall.

### Collected Works Book

Among Glaser's unfinished projects when he died was a volume of his collected works, to be published by Taschen. This “dummy” copy was one of many iterations of the book that he had worked on over the years.

### Button Collection

These framed button samples served as a tribute to Glaser's father, Eugene, who worked as a dry cleaner and tailor. As a boy, Glaser would assist him on the weekends.

### Colorful Toy Block

In 1965, Glaser designed a toy, Cubismo—a large, colorfully patterned cube made of many smaller cubes—for *Art in America*. It appeared on the cover of the magazine's year-end issue and was later mass-produced.

### Italian Etching

In the early 1950s, a young Glaser spent a year studying with the artist Giorgio Morandi in Milan through a Fulbright scholarship. This etching by Glaser, titled *Quartet*, is from that period.

### Gold Trinket Shape

This gold matzo was made by artist Judi Harvest, a former student of Glaser's.

### Box of Sharpened Pencils

As a present for one of Glaser's birthdays, creative director and former employee Sue Walsh (MFA 2006 Design) gave him several hundred pencils, which she had stayed up all night to sharpen herself.

### Gnome Figurine

Glaser designed this elfin mascot in 1988 for the Italian home goods company Alessi's Twergi collection.

# “IF I DON'T WORK, I DON'T LIVE.”



“If you perceive the universe as being a universe of abundance, then it will be.”  
—Milton Glaser

With the help of former Glaser assistant Ignacio Serrano (MFA 2017 Illustration as Visual Essay), friend and collaborator Mirko Ilić (faculty, MFA Illustration as Visual Essay) and Beth Kleber, head archivist of the Milton Glaser Design Study Center and Archives, we identified some of the objects that made the designer's space his own.